



Department of Ecology

Department of Ecology

2003-05 Operating Budget

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The operating budget for Ecology reflects an ongoing commitment to environmental priorities, particularly in its ongoing support for healthy watersheds. This budget also makes clear the choices and associated consequences of managing within limited revenues. It recognizes the General Fund simply cannot afford to support the level of activities it has in the past.

The Governor's proposal, after incorporating carry-forward cuts, one-time reductions, specific and non-specific cuts, and additions, is about \$16 million less than the current biennium funding level.

Cuts proposed in Ecology's budget

The Governor's budget proposal reflects a lower "base budget" for Ecology in the next biennium due to some one-time reductions and some cuts from the current biennium that will carry forward into the next biennium. In addition, his budget calls for a mix of "specific" and "non-specific" cuts.

The **non-specific cuts** total \$1.94 million and 42 FTEs, spread across multiple Ecology fund sources. Once the final budget is adopted, the agency will determine how and where to implement whatever non-specific cuts are approved by the Legislature and the Governor.

The **specific cuts** call for eliminating another 44 FTEs. The highlights are as follows:

- Air visibility program is eliminated ~ \$691,000 and 4 FTEs. This eliminates work to reduce haze and protect visibility in our national parks and wilderness areas in Washington and neighboring states.
- Air education (the costs and risks of air pollution) ~ \$274,000 and 2 FTEs. This will reduce or eliminate public opinion surveys, community-based outreach initiatives that encourage the use of less polluting vehicles, and K-12 presentations and course material development that communicate the negative effects of air pollution to school children.
- Livestock management program cut in half ~ \$596,000 and 4 FTEs. Inspections at dairy farms in watersheds with bacterial or nutrient pollution problems will take place once every two years rather than every year.
- Toxics Cleanup Program technical support, public involvement and sediment cleanup ~ \$1,023,000 and 4 FTEs. This will reduce technical assistance and guidance to parties involved in the cleanup of sites contaminated with hazardous waste and slow the cleanup rate of these sites.
- Hazardous-waste compliance ~ \$406,000 and 2 FTEs. This is a 15% reduction in education and technical assistance for business that generate less than 220 pounds of dangerous waste per month, otherwise known as small quantity generators.
- Solid-waste technical assistance ~ \$339,000 and 1 FTE. An 18% program reduction will result in less technical engineering and hydrology assistance to local health districts regarding engineering reviews for new landfills, moderate risk waste facilities, closing of landfills, and groundwater monitoring.
- Water-rights processing ~ \$2 million and 6 FTEs. This extends the timeline for reducing the 2,000 water right change and transfer applications backlog by up to nine months from FY 2005 to FY 2006.
- Well-licensing ~ \$154,000 and 1 FTE. Support for data management and technical assistance for regulating well construction is reduced by 8.8%.

- Flood management ~ \$2 million and 4 FTEs. This is a 50% reduction for the 03-05 biennium. Some money will be continued for Local Government flood damage reduction projects, flood mapping, technical assistance for the National Flood Insurance Program and flood damage reduction projects.
- Pro-rated administration cuts ~ \$356,000 and 2 FTEs. This is the proportionate share of the above program cuts.

Additions proposed in Ecology's budget

The Governor proposes adding about \$2.1 million and 1 FTE to Ecology's operating budget. The highlights are as follows:

- Local-government grants to develop new shoreline master programs ~ \$2 million. This money is set aside to settle the appeal of a Pollution Control Hearings Board decision relating to Ecology's new guidelines for local shoreline master plans.
- Dam safety ~ \$90,000 and 1 FTE. Fees for approving new dam construction and modifications will be increased to cover the cost of inspections, and the additional staff person will help meet the national standard of not more than five years between inspections for high-risk dams.

Funding proposed for continued work with dedicated revenues

The Governor's proposal allows for 5 FTEs and \$10.8 million for continued work in the following areas, with some changes in the way the work is funded:

- The rescue tug at Neah Bay is continued for one more winter while an equitable fund source is pursued.
- Continued support for healthy watersheds, buying water and stream-flow monitoring. This also includes drought response and represents a re-appropriation of money committed but not expended the current biennium for watershed planning grants.
- Emergency cleanup of priority toxic sites. This sets aside Toxics Cleanup Account money from the current biennium for this purpose.
- Biosolids permitting. This uses existing fund balance from revenue collections to address backlogs in work associated with writing initial permits and providing technical assistance to both biosolids generators and land appliers.

Proposed fund transfers

The Governor's budget also proposes to make the following transfers between accounts:

- Site Closure Account. A transfer of \$13.8 million in interest earnings is made from this account to help off-set the General Fund deficit. This is based on the assumption a sufficient balance remains in the account to manage near-term site closure activities.
- Local Toxics Control Account. \$4.1 million is transferred from this account to the State Toxics Control Account to cover the cost of methamphetamine lab cleanup. It is more efficient for these cleanups to be performed by the state, thereby relieving local governments of this burden.
- Woodstove Education and Enforcement Account. A \$600,000 transfer to the Air Pollution Control Account to be used for a wider variety of air pollution prevention activities.

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Ecology's Operating Budget as Proposed by the Governor for 2003-05

Dollars in thousands

	FTE	GFS	Total All Funds
Budget Authorized by the Legislature in 2002 session	1460	\$75,269	\$324,721
Cuts proposed in Ecology's budget			
Cuts made in 2002 session continued for 2 years & One-time funds not carried forward	(10)	(5,055)	(25,054)
Non-Specific cuts	(42)	(530)	(1,940)
Specific Program Cuts			
Air visibility	(4)	(691)	(691)
Air education (the costs & risks of air pollution)	(2)	(374)	(274)
Smoke & dust efforts shifted to Woodstove Account		(500)	0
Livestock management	(4)	(1,236)	(596)
Managing within Toxics Account revenues	(8)		(1,768)
Water rights processing	(6)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Well-Licensing	(1)	(454)	(154)
Shift a portion of federal permits to Water Quality Account		(160)	0
Flood Management	(4)		(2,000)
Pro-rated administration share of cuts	(5)	(356)	(356)
Total Specific cuts	(34)	(5,771)	(7,839)
Total cuts	(86)	(11,356)	(34,833)
Additions to in Ecology's budget			
Shoreline Guideline Settlement		2,000	2,000
Dam Safety	1	90	90
Total additions	1	2,090	2,090
Funding proposed for continued work with in dedicated revenues			
Rescue tug and emergency vessel towing			3,000
Continued support for healthy watersheds & drought response	4		4,403
Emergency toxics cleanups			2,149
Biosolids permit backlog	1		187
Aquatic weed management grants			1,050
Other technical changes to continue services (increased facility costs, insurance & pension rates)		1,706	6,043
Total Funding	5	1,706	16,832
TOTAL: Ecology's Operating Budget for 2003	1380	\$67,709	\$308,810